

Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 SAJ-01 NIC-01 /055 W

----- 035381

O 210955Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0154

UNCLAS ROME 4111

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, IT

1. SUMMARY: EXCLUSION OF PORTUGUESE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS FROM ELECTIONS IMPACTED ON ITALY WITH DRAMATIC SUDDENNESS AS HIGH-POWERED DC DELEGATION WALKED OUT OF ONGOING PCI CONGRESS AND EDITORIAL REACTION EMPHASIZED DANGERS OF SHARING POWER WITH COMMUNISTS. INCREASINGLY CONFIDENT PRO-COMMUNIST MEDIA SUDDENLY PUT ON DEFENSIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. REACTION TO EXCLUSION OF PORTUGAL CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS FROM ELECTIONS WAS SUDDEN AND SHARP. CONSERVATIVE IL TEMPO SAID ACTION EXPLODES "ILLUSION" THAT THERE IS A "DIFFERENT BRAND OF COMMUNISM," BUT THAT NEITHER PORTUGAL NOR ITALY COULD COUNT ON "MOTHER AMERICA" TO PREVENT OUR FALLING INTO COMMUNIST HANDS." DC ORGAN IL POPOLO CAUSTICALLY RIDICULED PCI'S CLAIM OF "ITALIAN WAY TO SOCIALISM," AND CENTER MODERATE IL GIORNALE SAW MOVE AS END OF "DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM" IN PORTUGAL. LATTER PAPER, AMONG OTHERS, SOME PAPERS HAD BEEN INCREASINGLY MILD IN COMMENTS ON PROSPECTS OF HISTORIC COMPROMISE, AS THOUGH THEY WERE KEEPING THEIR OPTIONS OPEN. LA STAMPA'S INFLUENTIAL CHIEF FOREIGN EDITOR ARRIGO LEVI NOTED THAT "OBVIOUS THIRST FOR POWER OF LISBON COMMUNISTS IS CREATING DIFFICULTIES FOR THE LARGE COMMUNIST PARTIES IN FRANCE AND ITALY WHICH HAVE

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ANNOUNCED THEIR OWN "PARLIAMENTARIAN AND PLURALISTIC" WAY."

3. CORRIERE DELLA SERA AND IL GIORNO, INITIALLY SILENT ON THE MATTER, WEIGHED IN WITH HEAVY CRITICISM OF THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY AND SAW IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS FOR ITALY. CORRIERE'S ALBERTO SENSINI SAW THE BANNING OF A 'POTENTIAL MAJORITY PARTY' AS "AN ABUSE OF AUTHORITY THAT GOES AGAINST ANY ELEMENTARY RULE OF DEMOCRACY AND PLURALISM. HE ADDED THAT 'THE LISBON EVENTS ARE SERIOUS PER SE, A CAUSE FOR WORRY FOR ALL DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE, AND MAKE US REFLECT ON THE FUTURE OF THE ALLIANCE, OF WHICH PORTUGAL IS A FULL-FLEDGED PARTNER."

4. MODERATE LEFT IL GIORNO'S TITO DE STEFANO SAID THAT PORTUGUESE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN "WILL BE A FARCE IN WHICH ONLY THE COMMUNISTS, WHO SUPPORT AND ARE SUPPORTED BY THE MILITARY RADICALS, WILL BE ABLE TO SAY WHAT THEY THINK.. THIS IS A DECISION WHICH MAY START A CHAIN REACTION FULL OF DANGERS FOR PORTUGAL, EUROPE AND DETENTE."

5. OF NON-COMMUNIST PRESS, ONLY LEFTIST MESSAGGERO DEFENDED THE ACTION AS "A FORMALITY... (SINCE) COMPLETE DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM HAS ALREADY BEEN GRANTED." THE PAPER ADDED THE FOLLOWING DAY THAT THE PCI'S REACTION TO THE DC WALKOUT FROM THE PCI CONGRESS WAS "RESPONSIBLE AND CONTROLLED."

6. THE COMMUNIST PRESS SHOWED CONSIDERABLE EMBARRASSMENT. PAESE SERA SAID IT WAS "GROTESQUE" THAT THE PCI WAS BLAMED FOR "DECISIONS WHICH THE PORTUGUESE MILITARY HAS TALKEN TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS IN THAT COUNTRY." PARTY-ORGAN UNITA' CHARACTERIZED THE DC ACTION AS AN ATTEMPT TO STIR UP "COLD COLD-WAR PASSIONS."VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ELECTIONS, POLITICAL PARTIES, COMMUNISTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ROME04111
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750099-0183
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750327/aaaaayee.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 SEP 2003 by greeneet>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2003 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: n/a
TAGS: SOPN, PINT, IT, PO, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS
To: LISBON
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006